

Town Hall for Class of 2024

May 11, 4 p.m.

Brand Stille: Thank you very much Jo Ann, and I want to thank all of you for joining us today. We're excited to have you with us for this Town Hall. I want you to know that you are already making Wofford history, that you are a member of the largest first-year class in Wofford's 165-year history. Five hundred and three students have committed to join us in the fall and we're excited about that. In addition, we had a record number of applications this year, and so admission was more competitive than ever this year, so congratulations on your acceptance. We are excited that you plan to join us this fall. Now so far to this point in your Wofford journey, the Admission and Financial Aid offices have been your primary point of contact. But now that you're admitted and now that you've decided to join us, we think you need to be communicating with many others on campus as you begin registration, orientation and as you plan for move-in. This is an exciting time and we want you to know that we're here to help. Wofford is an extraordinary community of students, faculty, staff, alumni and other friends who are all committed to your success. And because of this commitment, you will have every opportunity to learn, to grow, develop, to forge your path to the future as you make friends that will last for a lifetime. This Town Hall is about your questions, and if, because of Covid-19 we don't have all the answers yet, please know that it's our plan that you will be joining us on campus, in-person in the fall. We haven't made an official announcement yet, but we are certainly working toward that possibility. We will be prepared for the future, no matter what it brings, and we will continue to communicate with you as decisions are made. So, thanks again for joining us today and let's get started.

Question: With the largest class ever, how are you going to handle the housing situation?

Roberta Bigger: Thank you for asking that question, I know it's been framed in a couple of different ways. The incoming class will be housed in Greene, Marsh and Jerome Johnson Richardson Hall. So, between those three buildings, we are confident we can house the students who want to be residents' students in the class. As Brand mentioned, the working group that is getting everything ready for the fall, we are also going to have a couple of rooms designated as quarantine rooms this fall. That working group is working on procedures so we can socially distance students if we have to in the fall.

Question: When registering for classes, will incoming first-year students be assigned an advisor? If so, are there general advisors or ones based on the student's major/track?

Megan Tyler: Yes. In our faculty-advising model, all first-year students are assigned to an advisor. Students start with a general education advisor that will help you identify ways to explore different majors and help guide you in shaping your Wofford education. Once you declare your major you will receive an additional advisor within that specific department who will communicate with you and continue to support you in your education and your plans after

college. We know that signing up for classes can be an intimidating process and so to aid you in the process you will find registration resources available to you on the new student information page, which is located at www.wofford.edu/nsi. Additionally, Wofford has a summer advising team which will help guide you through your transition to the college and through registration for Fall 2020 classes. When students arrive to campus for fall orientation, you will then meet with your general education advisor who serves as part of your student success team. This team is there to help you adjust to life at Wofford, and I'd like to ask Dean Wallace to share a little more information about your student success team and the roll that our orientation staff plays in that.

Beth Wallace: Thanks Megan. Good morning, good afternoon. I'm sorry, my days and hours blend together. But we are so glad to be on here with you and even more importantly, so excited to meet you in just a few weeks, it will be here before we know it. Megan mentioned a very important concept, idea, program that we have at Wofford that is unique to us. It's called the student success teams. She's already mentioned one member of that student success team, your academic general advisor. The other members of that team will be your orientation staff. Those are students who have applied to be on orientation staff, and they will be with you really, starting in August. We have some things lined up for you that you are going to start to meet them even before you move to campus. But then they will be with you through the fall orientation and into the fall semester when you register for FYI, which is our seminar course. The third member of that team, the student success team, is your FYI instructor. And so those staff members will see you twice a week, sometimes three times a week to help you transition into Wofford. The fourth member of that team is also unique to Wofford, it's your personal librarian, that you will meet during the first couple of weeks of classes. This is a resource that you will find very valuable, not only that first semester but throughout your time at Wofford. Again, this is unique to Wofford. We developed this several years ago and have found it really an effective way in all different aspects across campus to assist our students in transitioning their first semester.

QUESTION: Does Wofford have a parent forum or an opportunity for parents to get involved or give feedback?

Nayef Samhat: First, I want to welcome all of the new Terriers into the Wofford family. Prema and I are looking forward to meeting all of you on move-in day, if not before, and parents as well. Thank you for coming to Wofford and joining our wonderful family, it's going to be a transformational experience. Indeed, we love the involvement of family, parents, the whole family. We have a variety of opportunities for parents to get involved. We have a parent's leadership council, there's a monthly parent e-newsletter that comes out and that will help keep you updated on all the events on campus, around campus, and ways you can stay engaged and opportunities to help. We have a parents Facebook page. And we also hope to have Family Weekend in the fall. We are planning on fall activities as normal and will keep you updated as Brand indicated. So, there are lots of ways to get involved and we look forward to having parents involved in the Wofford experience and the Wofford family.

QUESTION: Will Wofford consider delaying the start of the fall semester because of COVID-19?

Nayef Samhat: And that is the most important question out there in many ways. In fact, I have said both to the faculty and staff, and to our students who are returning, that we are indeed committed to bringing students back on to campus in the fall. But we are not going to jeopardize the health and well-being of anyone in the Wofford community. So, our plan is, follow public guidelines and appropriate practices in the event we do bring everyone back to campus in the fall. Move-in day is August 26th, the new residence hall will be open and ready for business on that day. What we have in place now are two committees that are intended to help guide us in our planning for our opening in the fall. We have a working group on the return to campus made up of representatives from across the college to formulate best practices, health and safety guidelines, equipment needs and the like that will shape our rules for how we engage across the entirety of campus activities. Whether it's classroom activities, offices, coaches, athletic events, plays, the whole range of campus activities. And they'll report to us in mid-June, and we will discuss it with the cabinet and make a decision on our plans for the fall sometime late in June. On the other hand, we do have another committee, the calendar committee, which is also looking at alternatives to the existing academic calendar. And when we think about alternatives, we are thinking about block scheduling, moving the start date back a couple of weeks, how we might manage class times during the week. All of this is to ensure, number one, we have students back on campus and they have the full and complete academic and student life experience. Again, our decisions are guided by public guidelines on health and safety. Our priority is the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and coaches. At this moment we are planning on being on campus at the start of the fall semester.

QUESTION: Will orientation look different this year because of coronavirus?

Beth Wallace: At this point we are planning our orientation program with students on campus, knowing that some of those events might need to be changed a little bit, tweaked a little bit to support social distancing. We have made some changes already but our team of 84 (orientation staff) students who we meet with on Zoom on a weekly basis right now, which has kind of been fun and interesting, we're going to continue to get together over the summer because we're so excited about meeting you. We will continue with our planning, knowing as more information comes in as these committee's report to Dr. Samhat, that we will tweak and change orientation as appropriate. But right now, as Dr. Samhat mentioned, August 26th we're looking for a move-in process and will continue the orientation process until classes start the following Monday.

Follow up question: Will we still get to go to Camp Greystone?

Beth Wallace: I love that that's already a tradition that's known among these classmates. Yes, we are planning to go to Greystone. I might be the best place to go because it's so wide open and there's so many acres to spread out on. So yes, at this point, we are still planning on Greystone. What we're not going to be doing, and you may or may not know this, is we're not going to do the summit adventures, which was about 24 different locations where students

would go and do different things. But we are going to be on campus doing something just as fun. The students have called that the Saturday-palooza. Think of a carnival type day with more information you transition into Wofford. So as far as I know, we are going to Greystone. That is one of my happiest days of the year, so I'm really hoping that continues and we're still planning on it at this point.

Follow-up question: What exactly is Camp Greystone?

Beth Wallace: I love that. Camp Greystone is actually a girl's camp during every other time of the year. It's about 45 minutes to an hour away in Tuxedo, NC. It has been a tradition of Wofford for over 20 years to go spend the day and most of the evening at Camp Greystone. And we load about 12, we may need more this year Brand, and we charter our students up on buses the morning of Thursday, the day after you move in. And we have a full day of fun and games and structured activities, free time, time to get to know each other, time to get to know your classmates, time to ask a lot of questions to the orientation staff. One of the highlights of the day is we have a very nice picnic by the lake to top off the day's events and then they do what they call Club Wofford in the evening. And I am honored and privileged that I get to witness that, it's a lot of fun. It just creates great memories in that every year seniors come to me and say can we go to Greystone, can we mirror that? And I say, you plan it and I'll be there. It's a really fun event. And so, our plan is to go at this point. It's a highlight of orientation.

Jo Ann Brasington: And I will add that President Samhat is famous for grilling steaks sometime during that event.

Nayef Samhat: Well, on an occasion or two. I'd prefer to eat them!

QUESTION: Do students need to clean their own residence hall rooms or is there a cleaning service provided?

Roberta Bigger: My friends know that I'm a germaphobe, so I like to talk about cleaning. When you arrive your residence hall rooms will be very clean. We have a great facilities staff and we have improved our programs and cleaning products since we've learned about the virus. So, they will clean the rooms beforehand. But once you move into them, students are responsible for cleaning their own rooms. And then upperclassmen, who live in suites, are responsible for cleaning their bathrooms, not just their rooms. The facilities staff clean all hall baths and common areas, classrooms and the like. So yes, if you don't do that at home, you might want to start doing some YouTube videos about how to clean your own room. Your roommate will love you even more!

QUESTION: Does Wofford offer health care for students? What services are available on campus in case of illness?

Beth Wallace: That is something else that is near and dear to my heart. We have a full wellness clinic with a nurse practitioner that is there full time as well as a nursing staff. You can walk in if

you're not feeling well. We think this fall we will be operating a lot on appointments, basically to keep everyone safe. We will continue working on those guidelines for the fall. Students can come in when they're not feeling well, be seen by a nurse practitioner, diagnosed and also if needed, get a prescription. We do not fill prescriptions, but we have pharmacies close by to the campus. But they can leave with a prescription. We also have a long, long term relationship with our medical directors, with our college physicians. If there is a need to go see a physician, we help make that appointment for you, their off-campus offices. All of these services, the off-campus office visit as well as our clinic services, are all covered in your boarding fee. Unlimited visits and a lot of support, whether it's an acute illness, a sudden onset or chronic illness. So, we're very pleased to be able offer those services to our students.

QUESTION: Is there a meal plan for a vegan or pescatarian diet?

Roberta Bigger: Wofford is so fortunate that we have an amazing culinary services department and we partner with a company called AVI to provide our program for us. There are several locations on campus where students can eat. And the staff has a nutritionist and she will work very closely with the students who have a special diet, who need gluten free, vegan or pescatarian food options. I can tell you; you will not lose any weight at Wofford College if you go to dining services on a regular basis. You will enjoy all of the many options you'll have.

QUESTION: Do we need to set up our meal plans before we arrive on campus?

Roberta Bigger: Through the FYI site that's been mentioned by Megan and Dean Wallace you'll have opportunities between now through August 26th to make sure that you have pre-registered for services like your meal plan; that you've gotten your medical forms in and things like that. We've set it up to constantly remind you from now until then to make sure that you've checked off your to-do list for us, and for yourself, to have an easy process during move-in.

Roberta Bigger – I see there's a question in the chat about housing. We are in the process right now of finishing up the lottery for upperclassmen about where they will live, and they'll get notified this week. And the incoming students in the class of 2024 will get notified the first full week in August about what residence hall they've been assigned to.

QUESTION: What can students do now to prepare to enroll at Wofford in August?

Megan Tyler: That's a great question. One of the most important things that you guys can be doing right now is to log in frequently to your myWofford account and reference your FYI checklist. So, when you log in to myWofford account you will see a FYI page and right in the center is a heading called "Student Checklist". If you click that heading, you'll see a list of forms that you need to submit throughout this summer. It's important that you guys check back in on a regular basis because we'll upload new forms all throughout the summer. Admission will

certainly be communicating with you guys to let you know as new forms are posted and you'll see their due dates corresponding with each form. One of the other things that you can be doing this summer is to tune into some of our summer programming that we're going to be offering for all of you. This is going to include lots of different things. We do have some of our orientation staff members who are going to be hosting weekly sessions where they will cover a variety of different topics. Some of those include: Picking your roommate, finding a roommate, the first-year experience at Wofford, and lots more. And then each Wednesday, all throughout the summer, we will have a current student who will be taking over our Wofford Instagram account. So, you can follow us at whywofford and see a bit more about Wofford from our student's perspective. So those are two things that you can be doing this summer. The third is to definitely reach out to us here in Admission if you have questions. We are happy to support you through this process and we will get you in touch with the right person to help address your questions.

Jo Ann Brasington: Those are the last of our pre-submitted questions. We have a few more live:

QUESTION: There have been many discussions about Living/Learning communities. When do applications for these go live for interested first-year students?

Nayef Samhat: That's part of the registration process, through advising and registration process for the first-year students.

Beth Wallace: Right, be visiting the FYI website. You'll see descriptions of the Living/Learning Communities that will be posted there. And, as Dr. Samhat said, that is part of the registration process. If it's linked courses, you'll want to build a schedule around that. But again, visit the FYI website, those descriptions should be up soon, and you'll learn all about it.

Megan Tyler: And that Living/Learning application opens June 2nd and that is due July 7th.

Jo Ann Brasington: That is all of the open questions we have. Would any of our panelists like to add anything?

Nayef Samhat: I'd just like to, once again, welcome everyone to the Wofford family. This is an extraordinary place and you've gotten a sample just in this brief town hall of the extraordinary people who are part and parcel of the Wofford experience. Caring, compassionate, tight-knit, supportive community and a transformational experience inside and outside the classroom for you. But you need to take advantage of everything the college has to offer – all of the resources that we have on this campus to help you succeed and encourage your graduation – and this is for parents – in four years.

Jo Ann Brasington: We just had a question come in from someone who definitely wants to take advantage of all that we have to offer. They would like to know how a group of student would go about starting a new club or a sport.

Roberta Bigger: There was a question earlier about what club sports we have, and I wanted to draw their attention that we do have on the webpage, there is a page for intramural, club sports and campus recreation office. And we have a number of club sports, we have men's lacrosse, men's baseball, the equestrian team is considered a club team. These are in addition to all of our Division I sports. We have a fly-fishing club, and outdoors club, disc golf and ultimate frisbee. And those are funded in-part from the college and also student government funding. But to start a new club sport or student organization, there's an application on the Student Experience webpage. Go to www.Wofford.edu and click on Student Experience and then click on Getting Involved. There's an application there that would go to the faculty committee that works with our division and its self-explanatory in the application.

We have another one, this one is for you Beth Wallace. Is there a parent proxy log-in on a student's myWofford?

Beth Wallace: There is, we do use proxy, and I believe that can be found not only on the FYI webpage but also on the Registrars webpage, I believe. And that is something, there's several things that you can go ahead and get started on right now. Your car registration, giving us your cell phone number for emergency purposes. The all-important t-shirt size, which we use quite a bit, so we want you to do that. Your medical form, your housing form. So, look on that checklist. The proxy can be done, and so many things can be done along the way as you lead up to registering for classes and before you get your housing assignment. So, we want you to take care of those things. And, as Dean Bigger mentioned, we'll talk more later in the summer about move-in and registration process on August 26th. But I am a big fan of getting it all checked off and you go through express line and you are golden. You will be shocked and surprised at how pleasant that day will be when you get everything done prior to coming to campus. Everything is on your checklist. Megan mentioned and what I love about this checklist on your FYI tab is that it is personalized for you. So, if you've done your medical form, it's checked off. If you've registered your car, it's checked off. So, it's a personalized checklist. So, keep that in mind as you visit the FYI webpage.

Roberta Bigger: And Dean Wallace, aren't there some new pages this year that parents can see, and they don't need a special password to get to those?

Beth Wallace: Yes, Megan mentioned those. It's the new student information that's public on our webpage. Megan, it's www.wofford.edu/nsi, right?

Meghan Tyler: That's right. You'll also see a planning calendar resource on that page. And so, for a lot of you asking questions about dates and when things will be available, that planning calendar is a great resource to reference and to save on your phones.

Beth Wallace: Can I mention one more thing? The new component that we have this year is that you can get your college ID. Again, that's right up there with your t-shirt size. So, you can go online to the FYI webpage and upload an appropriate photo, and we'll give you all kinds of guidelines on what that should look like. And your college ID will be ready for you the day you come to college. That's an exciting piece of this whole process.

Jo Ann Brasington: Dr. Samhat, we've had a few more questions trickle in. Could you explain one more time the two groups that you have working, that we haven't quite made a decision officially on how the fall is going to look but if you explain that one more time, I think that would make people feel better.

Nayef Samhat: I see that question. Yes, we want to but health, safety is our priority. The one working group on the return to campus is all about addressing the issues raised in that question. What do classrooms look like, what do lab rooms and residence halls look like with social distancing guidelines. So, their charge is to come to us and the community and present to us a framework of practices and principles to guide our interactions and engagement on this campus. So, I can't give you a precise answer now. Some of the things we're talking about are stretching the class day so we go a little bit into the evening so we can take advantage of larger spaces for instance. How we align students in a classroom, things like that. Lab spaces, you can practice some social distancing, how one might use a hood in a Chemistry lab for instance. All of these are guidelines that this committee, the working group, are examining. They have faculty representation on that group, as well as, Dean Wallace is on that group as well. So, we expect to have their results and recommendations back to us in the middle of June so we can make a sound decision by the end of June and prepare to welcome students to campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: Can you also speak to if there are plans to test staff and students for coronavirus?

Nayef Samhat: I think that some kind of screening procedure is one of the things that we are talking about. We are having a conversation about bringing staff back at the end of this month or sometime in June. That would help us actually serve as a good set of guidelines and practices for a more robust campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: Dean Bigger, we have a question: how does Wofford match roommates?

Roberta Bigger: Last summer at the orientation program I told the parents that we take the applications and we throw them up in the air and the two that land closest together, that's how we match up roommates. That got a big laugh. About half of the incoming classes find their own roommate, through the FYI site, and different connections like that. And I think the O staff has even planned some programs where students can get to know each other through Zoom this summer to find a roommate. But then about half the class will fill out the application for a roommate and our residence life staff, who are a great group of professionals, take that information and with their years of experience, match up the students, and it's been very successful that way.

Jo Ann Brasington: Can you explain a little about how the housing lottery works?

Roberta Bigger: For incoming students, they'll be assigned a room, and a roommate if they don't choose one, so an incoming student does not have an option. But the last three years you live on campus you do. You enter a housing lottery; you pay a deposit to return for the next year by March 15th and then your name is placed in the housing lottery. For future years, you do get to rank your preferences for which residence hall you prefer to live in, which roommate or suitemate is your preference. So that happens from March 15 to May 15 every subsequent year that you are a resident student.

Jo Ann Brasington: And Dean Bigger, one more question: If you're not sure about bringing a car to campus, should you go ahead and register one or wait until you are sure you have a car?

Roberta Bigger: Sure. I know that sometimes parents tell their students that they have to make certain grades by mid-terms in order to get their vehicle on campus. If you know what vehicle you would bring to campus and if you know the license plate number, I would go ahead and pre-register it just in case things change and you want to have that vehicle on campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: We have no more questions, so that concludes our town hall meeting. Thank you for participating. Thank you to our panelists and to all the people behind the scenes who have this event possible. Be on the lookout for future town hall events for the Class of 2024. I know you've heard this all evening, but welcome. We are all really glad that you are now part of the Wofford community. Stay well Terriers!